

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

RECEIVED
JUN 13 1997
Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

ORIGINAL

In the Matter of)

Advanced Television Systems)
and Their Impact Upon the)
Existing Television Broadcast)
Service)

MM Docket No. 87-268

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

To: The Commission - Mail Stop 1170

PETITION FOR PARTIAL RECONSIDERATION

1. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of American University, licensee of noncommercial educational FM radio Station WAMU, Washington, D.C. ("WAMU" or the "Station"), hereby submits this Petition for Partial Reconsideration of the Commission's *Sixth Report and Order* in the above-referenced proceeding.^{1/} WAMU is one of the nation's leading National Public Radio ("NPR") outlets and currently provides NPR and significant local public affairs, news, and music programming to the National Capital area. The Table of Allotments in the *Sixth Report and Order* allots digital Channel 6 (82-88 MHz) for use by Station WTTG-TV, the Washington, D.C. FOX network affiliate, which currently operates on analog Channel 5. WAMU operates on 88.5 MHz, only 0.5 MHz separated from Channel 6. The problem of interference between TV Channel 6 and the noncommercial educational FM band, particularly the lower end of that band, is well known. WTTG's digital Channel 6 allotment is highly likely to result in intolerable interference for

^{1/} *Advanced Television Systems and Their Impact Upon the Existing Television Broadcast Service, Sixth Report and Order*, MM Docket No. 87-268, FCC 97-115 (released April 21, 1997).

No. of Copies rec'd 019
List ABCDE

both the television station and WAMU. Thus, WAMU requests reconsideration of that allotment and urges the Commission to allot another channel for digital use by WTTG.

2. There are over three million residents in the Washington metropolitan area, many of whom are likely to lose some or all FOX television network programming from WTTG and NPR programming from WAMU^{2/} because of interference between the two stations if WTTG's operates on Channel 6. Attached a letter from Donald B. Williamson, P.E., WAMU's consulting engineer, that supports the Station's position. Mr. Williamson states that the effect of "the high powered FM stations [in the Washington area] on the channel 6 picture quality will be intolerable." The transmitters for both stations are located near each another in northwest Washington, and co-siting -- which is sometimes implemented in an effort to alleviate typical Channel 6 interference -- is not practical in this case.

3. Moreover, after performing an engineering analysis of the potential harm that would result from the operation of WTTG on Channel 6, Mr. Williamson has found that theoretical unwanted interference from the digital television station to WAMU and other area radio stations will result as high in the spectrum as 90 MHz, well above WAMU's 88.5 MHz. The fact that the Commission has limited WTTG's digital effective radiated power to only 6.6 kW may help to ameliorate some of the interference problem, but the interference is not predictable and may be even higher than expected. It is also important to recognize that Fox has the right to apply to increase power in the future and is unlikely to be satisfied with a power level so much lower than that of its local competitors. If and when WTTG

^{2/} Both WAMU and WTTG have substantial amounts of local programming in addition to their network fare.

increases power, the interference problem will become worse and will have to be revisited if not addressed by the Commission now. At that later time, WTTG will already be operating on its new digital channel and will face an economic loss and public relations burden if it has to change digital channels. Thus action to correct the potential interference should be taken now; allowing WTTG's allotment to stand will only delay and make increasingly difficult the inevitable interference problem.

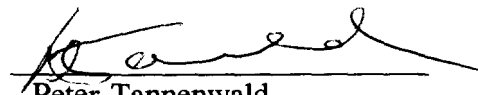
4. As stated above, WAMU is a leading NPR outlet serving the Nation's Capital. NPR and WAMU's local public radio service is a vital source of news and informational programming that is not readily available to Washington area residents from any other radio source.^{3/} If the Commission does not modify WTTG's digital television allotment, much of this valuable resource will be damaged, if not lost. Thus public interest warrants the Commission's reconsideration of the allotment of digital Channel 6 to WTTG.

5. For the above reasons, WAMU respectfully requests that the Commission reconsider its decision in the *Sixth Report and Order* and modify the digital allotment table to allot a channel other than Channel 6 to WTTG, Washington, D.C.

Irwin, Campbell & Tannenwald, P.C.
1730 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036-3101
Tel. 202-728-0400; fax 202-728-0354

June 13, 1997

Respectfully submitted,



Peter Tannenwald
Elizabeth A. Sims

Counsel for WAMU(FM)

^{3/} Some of WAMU's programming is nationally distributed by NPR, including the *Diane Rehm Show* and the *Derek McGinty Show*.

Can-Am Consultants Ltd.

Engineering Services from Florida to the Arctic Circle
P.O.Box 246 Queenstown MD 21658-0246
Voice 410-827-7431 Fax 410-827-6812

06/03/97 1237 EDT

Michael Byrnes
Radio Station WAMU -FM
American University
4400 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington DC 20016-8082

Dear Michael :

I have the copy of Peter Tannenwald's letter on hand with regard to the proposed FCC designation of TV Channel 6 for Channel 5 digital. We spent some time on the mathematics of this case and have reached the conclusion that such a proposal is a potential disaster for all concerned. We are all quite aware of the FCC requirements for the protection of channel 6 contours from FM interference as these conditions are well covered in Part 73 of the Rules.

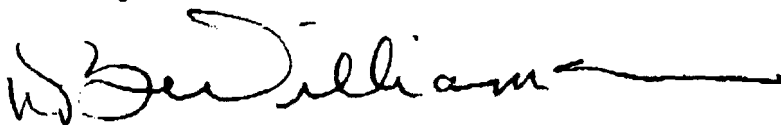
We had originally assumed that due to the dissimilar modulation techniques in the proposal i.e. digital/analog, there might be some improvement over the standard channel 6/FM problem. The arithmetic shows this not to be the case. The effect of the high powered FM stations on the channel 6 picture quality would be intolerable, even with co-siting of the transmitters - which is not practical in this case.

We did a cross analysis on the effect of the TV digital on the FM stations. This also shows theoretical unwanted interference up as far as 90 mhz. The FCC has attempted to minimize the effect by limiting channel 5 to 6.6 kw ERP on the digital. We would estimate that this power may have to be reduced further to under 3 kw. to help matters. Without co-siting (see the WPVI Philadelphia/88.5 mhz case) the extent of interference may not be predictable.

-2-

I would suggest that a strong petition to protest this proposal be prepared and filed.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.B. Williamson", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

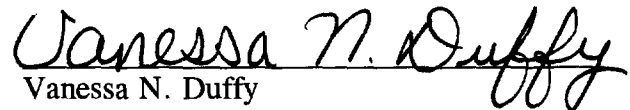
D.B. Williamson P.E.
Consulting Engineer.

Copy : Peter Tannenwald.
Fax 202-728-0354
202-885-1217

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Vanessa N. Duffy, hereby certify that on this 13th day of June, 1997, a copy of the foregoing "Petition for Reconsideration" has been served by U.S. first-class mail, postage prepaid, upon the following:

Ms. Molly Pauker
Station WTTG-TV
5151 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016


Vanessa N. Duffy